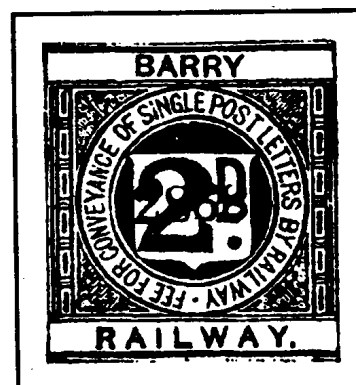


"Railway Letter Stamp Printers".

Roy Gault.

Rosemary Smith has recently drawn my attention to the excellent publication by Roger de Lacy-Spencer entitled "The Railway Letter Stamps of Great Britain & Ireland (1891-1947)", and the wealth of railway histories, crests, and maps it contains. I have to admit I've become hooked on them after browsing the catalogue! Readers will also recall that a small number of these railway letter stamps, and associated items, may be found with perfins - see Bulletins 302-305.

Although not strictly related to perfins, it should be borne in mind that the stamps came into operation on 1st February 1891 as pre-payment for the conveyance of 'urgent' letters within the U.K. by train (or steamship), and posted through conventional G.P.O. channels on arrival.

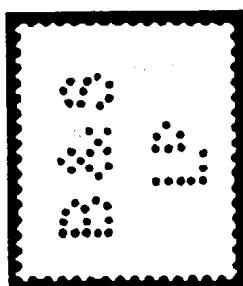


Although there were notable exceptions, the stamps were green in colour and of a standard design - the Barry Railway example is typical.

But where's the Perfin connection? Well, Roger's catalogue also lists the companies who produced these stamps. It transpires that there were at least 19 commercial printers involved, of which no less than 7 are known to have used perfins. They appear here in no particular order.

Bemrose & Sons Ltd, Derby . (They also had premises in Yeovil).

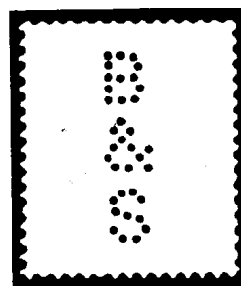
1890-1940



B6730.01

(Derby)

???



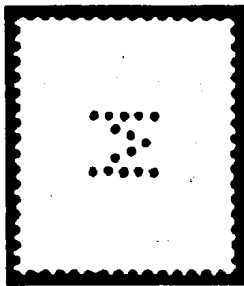
B6480.02

(Yeovil)

Stamps were supplied for the Cheshire Lines Committee, the Midland Railway, the South Eastern Railway, the Taff Vale Railway, and others.

McCorquodale & Co Ltd. Caxton Works. Glasgow.

1902-1939



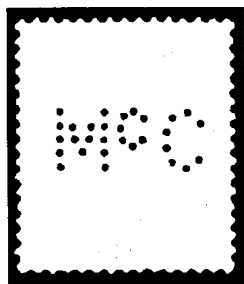
M0010.09

Not surprisingly, this office catered for many of the Scottish Railways, including:

Caledonian Railway
Highland Railway
North British Railway

McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Euston Square, London NW1.

1904-1945



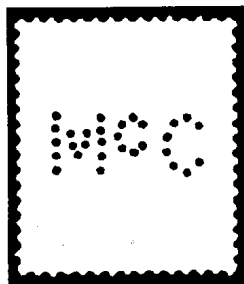
M1130.03

Amongst others, stamps were supplied to:

Barry Railway
London & North Eastern Railway
Port Talbot Railway & Docks

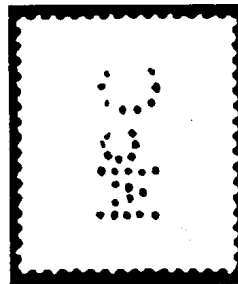
McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Newton-le-Willows, Lancashire.

1882-1920



M1130.01

1930-1939



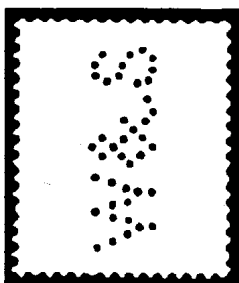
M1130.05

The Furness Railway, and the North Staffordshire Railway were supplied by this particular office. Prior to 1900, it also supplied railway letter stamps (along with the Glasgow office) for the Donegal Railway company of Ireland.

Of the commercial printers, this was probably the largest producer of railway letter stamps and generally looked after the requirements of the larger railways, including:

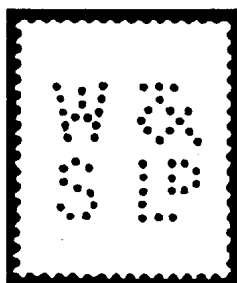
Great Eastern Railway
Great Northern Railway
London & South Western Railway
London Brighton & South Coast Railway
London, Tilbury & Southend Railway

1885-1948*



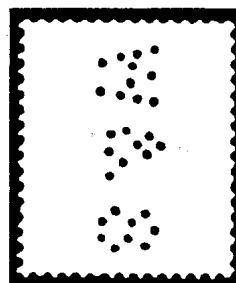
W6680.13M

1920-1922



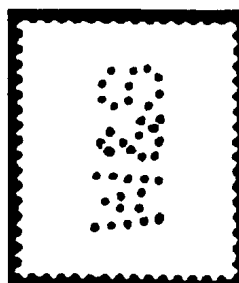
W6985.01

1924-1925



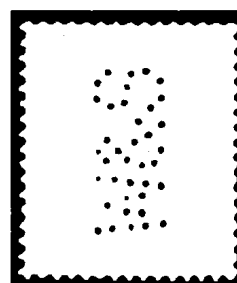
W6680.07v

1925-1939



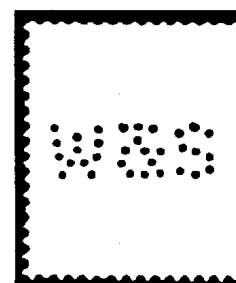
W6680.14

1930-1940



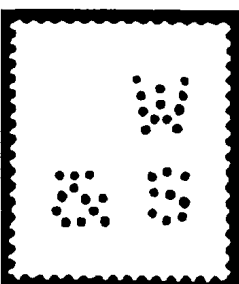
W6680.16

1943-1969*



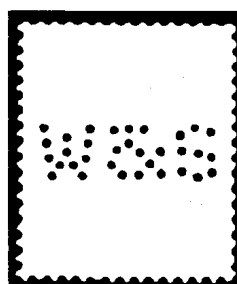
W6680.05M

1945-1957



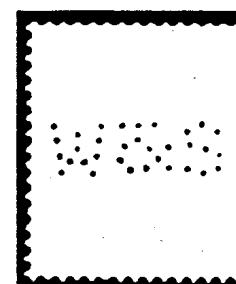
W6695.01

1945-1985*



W6680.04M

1955-1975



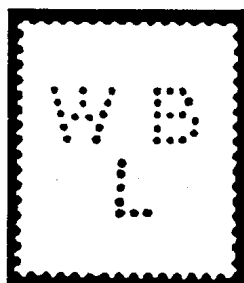
W6680.04b

Dies marked (*) were also used by other companies.

Waterlow Brothers. and Layton Ltd. 24-25 Birchin Lane, London EC.

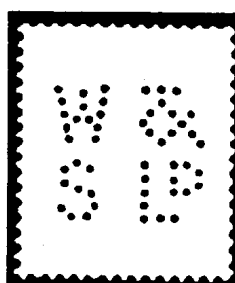
Registered 1887 - voluntary liquidation 31' July 1893. Reconstructed as a company of the same name in 1893, but again into voluntary liquidation 15th April 1920. Assets acquired by Waterlow & Sons Ltd.

1895-1920



W0660.02

1920-1922

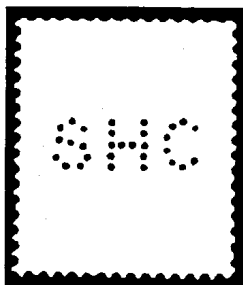


W6985.01

The company only produced railway letter stamps for a small number of railways, but most notable was the Great Western Railway.

Samuel Harrison Cowell & Co, Ipswich.

1890-1901



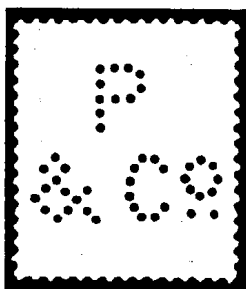
S3430.01

The company supplied railway letter stamps to the Colne Valley Railway.

The name changed in 1901 to become simply S Cowell Ltd.

Purcell & Co, Printers & Stationers, 124 Patrick St, Cork.

1877-1931



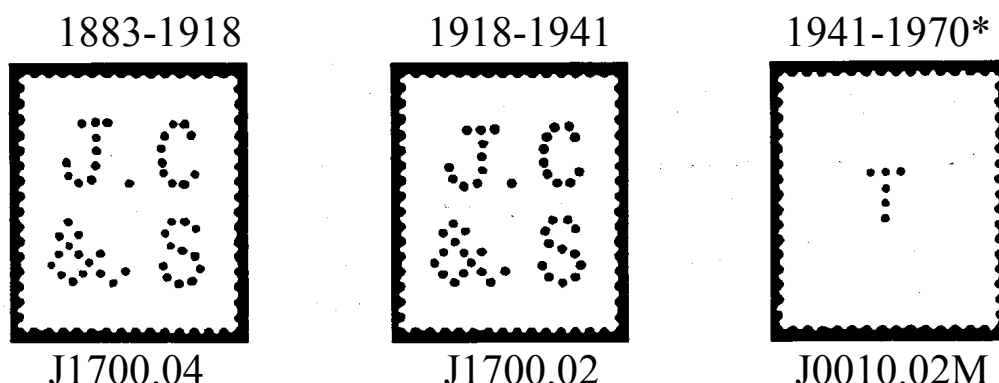
P1140.01

The company catered for the Irish Railway network, in particular:

Cork, Bandon & South Coast Railway
Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway

Sir Joseph Causton & Sons Ltd. 9 Eastcheap, London EC.

The company principally looked after the requirements of the Great Northern Railway, and the Midland & Great Northern Railway.



* This Sloper 12x1 multiheaded die was used by at least 15 users during the date range specified. It is not known for how much of that period Sir Joseph Causton & Sons Ltd used the die, nor indeed what the significance of the "T" was to them.

As with all articles in the Bulletin, I would be pleased to receive information from anyone who can contribute additional stamp details to help further refine the quoted perfin 'die in use' date ranges.

Other printers to look out for who may have used perfins, and were also associated with the production of railway letter stamps, are:

Woodall & Minshull, Oswestry.
Henry Blacklock & Co Ltd, London and Manchester.
W H Moss & Son Ltd, Whitehaven.
Allbutt & Daniel, Hanley.
Williamson, Bristol.
R Carswell & Sons, Belfast.
Sealy, Bryers & Walker, Dublin.
A Thom & Co Ltd, Dublin.
Browne, Nolan, Dublin.
James Calhoun, ???, Ireland.
N Harvey & Co, Waterford.

My sincere thanks go to Roger de Lacy-Spencer for allowing me to quote so freely from his catalogue.